Emergency Preparedness Regulation: *A Quick Reference Guide*

Overview of the Regulation	
Title	**18 AAC 80.055, Public water system preparedness requirements**
Purpose	To enhance preparedness of Public Water Systems (PWS) to maintain service and operations during and after a natural or human-caused emergency that would directly or indirectly affect drinking water quality and quantity.
General Description	Establishes a state requirement for most PWS to complete some level of emergency response planning. Depending on federal classification and population served, a PWS will be required to complete either a Vulnerability Assessment and a written Emergency Response Plan, or a Priority Measures Plan (abridged Emergency Response Plan).
Utilities covered	➢ All Community Water Systems (CWS) ➢ All Non-transient Non-community Water Systems (NTNCWS) ➢ Transient Non-community Water Systems serving 1,000 or more individuals (TNCWS)

Public Health Benefits	
Implementation of the Emergency Preparedness Regulation will result in…	➢ Greater continuity of water system operations during and after a disaster. ➢ Lessening of public health risks associated with drinking water due to inundation, power failure, or other events that could impact service and water quality.

Major Provisions

Requirements for *Community* Water Systems and *Non-Transient Non-Community* Water Systems	Requirements for *Transient Non-Community* Water Systems
If serving a population of 1,000 or more persons: • Complete a Vulnerability Assessment (VA) • Complete an Emergency Response Plan (ERP) • Update ERP Biennially If serving a population of 999 or fewer persons: • Complete a Priority Measures Plan (PMP) • Update Biennially	If serving a population of 1,000 or more persons: • Complete a Priority Measures Plan (PMP) • Update Biennially If serving a population of 999 or fewer persons: • No requirements

Vulnerability Assessment (VA)

➢ The process of identifying, quantifying, and prioritizing the vulnerabilities in a water system and assessing the threats from potential hazards to the public and infrastructure.

➢ The information on specific risks identified in the vulnerability assessment process will be used in drafting the Emergency Response Plan for the water system.

Emergency Response Plan (ERP)

A written document that prescribes specific actions water system staff would take to respond to, and mitigate, the detrimental effects of a natural disaster, human-caused act or accident, or other hazards that would affect a system's operation. The actions prescribed in an ERP are based directly on the findings of a water system's vulnerability assessment, and are therefore specific to each water system. An ERP addresses the following elements:

- System specific information
- PWS staff roles and responsibilities
- Communication procedures
- Identification of alternate drinking water source(s) for both short-term and long-term outages
- Plan for responding to complete or partial power loss
- Water sampling and monitoring
- Familiarization and training of system personnel in the plan

Priority Measures Plan (PMP)	
An abridged version of the ERP, the PMP prescribes specific actions water system staff will take to respond to, and mitigate, the detrimental effects of a natural disaster, human-caused act or accident, or other hazards affecting a system's operation. The PMP addresses the most basic elements of water system preparedness: • PWS staff roles and responsibilities • Communication procedures • Identification of alternate drinking water source(s) for both short-term and long-term outages • Plan for responding to complete or partial power loss • Familiarization and training of system personnel in the plan	

How is Compliance Determined?

Certification Forms	➢ The water system owner must complete and submit to DEC a **DEC VA/ERP** or **PMP Certification Form** confirming that the appropriate information is contained in the required emergency planning documents. ➢ There is no requirement to submit the VA, ERP, or PMP to DEC, but these documents must be available for review by an inspector during a Sanitary Survey.
Sanitary Surveys	➢ Routine Sanitary Surveys will include a review of a water system's overall safety, security, and emergency response procedures. ➢ The water system will provide the Sanitary Survey Inspector with access to the water system's ERP or PMP.

Critical Deadlines and Requirements

For New Water Systems (Beginning operation after August 20, 2012)

60 days after Approval to Operate	All new public water systems subject to this regulation must complete either a VA/ERP or PMP and submit the appropriate **DEC VA/ERP** or **PMP Certification Form**.

For Existing Water Systems (Began operation prior to August 20, 2012)

August 20, 2013	All systems required to complete a PMP must complete the documents and submit a **DEC PMP Certification Form**.
February 20, 2014	All systems required to complete a VA and ERP must complete the documents and submit a **DEC VA/ERP Certification Form**.

For All Water Systems

Biennially	All public water systems subject to this regulation must update their ERP/PMP every two (2) years after the initial ERP/PMP, and submit to DEC a **DEC Biennial Update Certification Form**.

Resources for Emergency Response Planning

Alaska DEC Drinking Water Program

Alaska DEC VA/ERP Online Toolkit
The VA/ERP Toolkit is a free online application for water system owners and operators containing:
• Checklists for conducting VAs and other assessments of water system vulnerabilities
• Templates for developing ERPs and PMPs
• Action Plans for specific incident response procedures
• Other publications for emergency management for water systems
The Drinking Water Program Website has emergency response planning information, including Toolkit CD-ROM ordering and contact information for the PWS Security Specialist (Phone: **907-269-8924**):
• **http://dec.alaska.gov/eh/dw/security/security.html**

U.S. EPA Water Security and Emergency Response Planning website

EPA provides digital and printable publications for emergency response planning and water security.
http://water.epa.gov/infrastructure/watersecurity/emerplan/index.cfm